

Sun night – 7-18-21 – disciplined life or temperance

Acts 24 – long introduction but will eventually get there

Please keep teen summer trip to Cobeac in prayer. We leave a week from tomorrow.

-pray for lost to be saved, decisions to be made, fire rekindled, unity in group

Prior to Covid shutdowns, life was busy with schedules and activities.

In March 2020, everything shut down, schedules were cancelled, activities ceased.

-the first week was like a vacation

-afterwards, I remember chomping at the bit wanting to do something, anything

After months of not being so busy, I began to get comfortable with not being busy and active

- positives

-had opportunity to slow down and spend more time with the kids

-was able to work on home projects

-I read more books during the past year than I have read in the past 5 years

-could decompress from pressures of ministry and refresh

-drawbacks

-healthy routines/patterns were stopped

-motivation and work ethic wavered

-priorities unbalanced

-an increased amount of time spent watching TV

-all round sloppy and sluggish with limited structure

-I was reminded of Amos 6:1 – “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion...”

-I found myself complacent with comfort and found it difficult to be disciplined

-there is a time to be busy like Martha

-there is a time to be still at Jesus feet like Mary

-but there is never a good time to be undisciplined

-being busy and productive requires one to be disciplined

-slowing down and growing in the Lord requires discipline too

### **Title: An exceptional life comes from a disciplined life**

We are talking about the topic of being disciplined not because I've mastered it but because I've seen the increasing need for me to put it into practice in my life.

I have found myself approaching opportunities to serve the Lord or being productive and fighting the feeling that I just don't feel like doing it.

-I know I should be doing it but am struggling with finding the motivation to do it.

I figured that if I'm struggling with this then there are probably others struggling with this too.

Let's take a step back for a minute.

Why do we even need to be disciplined?

Why can't we just do whatever we want whenever we want?

### 1. God has high expectations for you

- a. When you get saved, God begins a good work within you
  - i. Phil 1:6 - Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:
- b. God not only wants to start a good work within you but wants to finish it with a goal in mind
  - i. Jer 29:11 - For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.
- c. God is able to do more in us and through us than we can ask or think
  - i. Eph 3:20 - Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us
- d. God has high expectations for saved individuals
  - i. Start a good work in you
  - ii. Finish His work in you with a goal in mind
  - iii. Is able to do more in you than you could even imagine

### 2. God wants us to live our lives with excellence

- a. Phil 1:9-10 - And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

### 3. A disciplined life is vital in living with excellence

- a. Note: this is not a works based salvation
  - i. We can do nothing to earn the merits of heaven
    1. Salvation is only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ
- b. Note: this also doesn't mean that Christians can do the work of God apart from God

- i. Christians need to be disciplined to do their part as they partner with God as He does His work
  - 1. Example: You cannot convert someone to be saved
    - a. God must work in their heart to save them
    - b. However, God has chosen Christians to be the ones to share the message of salvation
    - c. We must be disciplined to share the gospel that gives the Spirit the opportunity to move in someone's heart
    - d. Without a disciplined soul-winner, few souls will ever be saved
- c. I would argue that being disciplined is one of the most important virtues to possess in order to excel in any area of life.
  - i. When someone is undisciplined...
    1. The undisciplined will repeatedly hit the snooze button and sleep in too late
    2. The undisciplined will have excessive screen time: binge watch shows, video games, youtube...
    3. The undisciplined will be sore losers and use poor sportsmanship
    4. The undisciplined will have bad eating habits and eat excessive junk food
    5. The undisciplined will engage substances like alcohol, vaping or smoking
    6. The undisciplined will be distracted on their phones while driving
    7. The undisciplined will constantly be unpunctual
    8. The undisciplined will have temper tantrums, yell, or hit
    9. The undisciplined will gossip to get the inside scoop and be in other's biz
    10. The undisciplined will engage in any kind of form of fornication
    11. The undisciplined will not study and be prepared for tests in school
    12. The undisciplined will never reach their full potential as an athlete
    13. The undisciplined will never finish a book they started
    14. The undisciplined will quit their new year's resolution within 3 months
    15. The undisciplined will not be able to commit to a work out routine
    16. The undisciplined will struggle flourish in their marriage relationship
    17. The undisciplined will struggle to be consistent in parenting
    18. The undisciplined will be spotting in their church attendance
    19. The undisciplined will be unreliable with their help in ministry
    20. The undisciplined will be unable to maintain a daily Bible devotion
    21. The undisciplined will have an inconsistent prayer life

22. The undisciplined will make decisions for God on a summer trip but fail to follow through with them after they get home

23. The undisciplined will be unable to overcome the fear of sharing the gospel

d. Discipline is necessary in any area of life if you are to live it with excellence

#### 4. Temperance

a. "Temperance" is mentioned 3 times in the Bible

b. Temperance defined: a pattern of moderation in regard to natural appetites and passions; restraint; moderation in drinking, eating, amusement, entertainment, pleasures and passions.

i. It's the ability to say no to the impulses and desires of the flesh

c. Temperance is always mentioned in a list

i. A list of materials is always used in building something complex.

ii. Temperance seems to be an essential building material in your spiritual growth

d. Acts 24:24-25 – 1<sup>st</sup> mention of temperance

i. Paul reasoned with Felix of righteousness, temperance, judgment

1. Temperance (discipline) is key to living right and being prepared for judgment to come

2. Felix wouldn't accept Christ because of his lack of discipline

a. It wasn't a "convenient season" for him

b. Felix was more interested in comforts of luxury than a disciplined life

c. Temperance is the personal restraint of conveniences

e. Gal 5:22-23 – temperance is a fruit of the spirit

i. Temperance is listed last out of the 9

1. Perhaps it is mentioned last because it is foundational to all the others

a. Must have discipline in love to love those that hate you

b. Must have discipline in joy to remain joyful in difficult times

c. Must have discipline in peace to maintain peace in uncertainties

d. Must have discipline in longsuffering to not give up

e. Must have discipline in gentleness when your frustrated

f. Must have discipline in goodness when your surrounded by evil

g. Must have discipline in faith when all hope is lost

h. Must have discipline in meekness when you know you could put a disrespectful person in their place

- ii. Temperance is a fruit of the Spirit which means it comes from God and can't be manufactured yourself
  - 1. Our flesh is weak and our ability for self-control is limited
  - 2. Temperance from God's Spirit picks up where our self-discipline runs out
  - 3. Temperance from God is what makes you able to have love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness when it is hard
  - 4. The discipline of yielding to God's Spirit will enable you to have supernatural discipline to overcome what is thought to be impossible
  - 5. Temperance brings the consistency to do right even when it is inconvenient
- f. 2 Pt 1:5-10 – list of 7 things to add to your faith
  - i. 1<sup>st</sup> fruit of the Spirit is love
    - 1. The end result of adding to your faith is charity/love
  - ii. Temperance is 3<sup>rd</sup> on the list
    - 1. Faith – 1<sup>st</sup> saved
    - 2. Virtue – add moral excellence
    - 3. Knowledge – Bible study, relationship with God
    - 4. Temperance – discipline to grow and strive for excellence
    - 5. Patience – ability to endure difficult
    - 6. Godliness – result of a pattern of disciplined life
    - 7. Brotherly kindness – right heart, right actions
    - 8. Charity – selfless love towards others

## 5. Temperate

- a. Mentioned 3 times in the Bible
- b. Titus 1:8 – Pastors are commanded to be temperate
- c. Titus 2:2 – the aged men are to be temperate
  - i. Male leaders and older men are to show the younger boys how to live a disciplined life
    - 1. Boys just want to play
      - a. Boys play, men work
      - b. Boys are care free, men take on responsibility
      - c. We need boys to not just show up but step up for the things of God and be disciplined
- d. 1 Cor 9:24-27 – illustration of a marathon runner's need to be disciplined
  - i. :25 – “every man that striving for the mastery” – keys to living with excellence
  - ii. :25 – “temperate in all things” – discipline in all areas of life

- iii. :26 – “not as uncertainty” – have a clear goal to live for the glory of God
- iv. :26 – “so fight I” – discipline is a constant battle
  - 1. Resist and refill
    - a. Resist – be able to say no to harmful things and yes to helpful
    - b. Refill – read Bible, pray
- v. :27 – “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection”
  - 1. Control your body impulses, don’t let your body control you

Invitation:

- 1. Living a disciplined life cannot be stressed enough
  - a. Living with excellence is only accomplished through temperance and discipline
    - i. Temperance has no value to you if you’re ok with mediocrity or not concerned with living up to your fullest potential.
    - ii. But to everyone else, you cannot live a life of excellence the way God intended for you without temperance and discipline in your life
- 2. Have you lost your motivation to be disciplined in some area of your life?
- 3. Have you lost hope that God was done working in your life?
- 4. Have you lost sight that God wants to do great things in your life that are bigger and better than you could ever ask or think?
- 5. God wants you to live a life of excellence according to His Word and empowered by His Spirit?
- 6. Is there something that you know you should be doing but have not been doing it because of some other preferred convenience?
  - a. Have you been consumed more with being entertained or more committed to working to be productive?
- 7. Have you been failing repeatedly in some area in your life?
  - a. Is there a relationship that is deteriorating because of a breakdown of discipline in your life?
  - b. Do you need to ask God for forgiveness?
  - c. Do you need to ask someone else for forgiveness?
  - d. Do you need to be depending on God to help you instead of trying to fix it yourself?
- 8. Have you grown weary in the battle against the flesh and do you just need to be encouraged to get back in the fight?

Pray